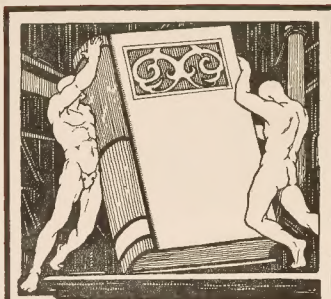


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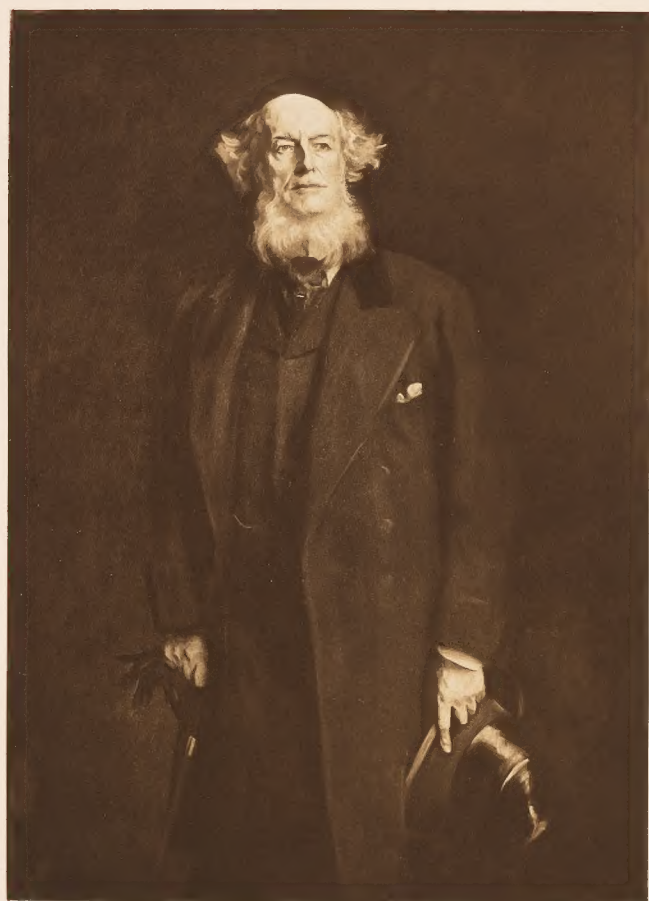
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THE WORK OF
JOHN S. SARGENT

BY EARL OF WEMYSS

MANSON

MEYNELL

CHARLES
SCRIBNER'S

EARL OF WEMYSS

THE WORK OF
JOHN S. SARGENT
R.A.

WITH INTRODUCTIONS BY
J. B. MANSON
&
MRS. MEYNELL

LONDON:
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SONS

MCMXXVII

*The Sargent Collection of Art
in the British Museum*

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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INTRODUCTION

by

J. B. MANSON

(1927)

MDE BONALD'S remark that "Literature is the expression of Society" would be peculiarly apposite if applied, with the substitution of Portrait-painting for Literature, to the work of John Singer Sargent.

No other artist, not even Raeburn or Reynolds, has produced a completer or more vivid record of the distinguished men and women of his time, or has satisfied more adequately the claims of society.

Estimation of the work of any important painter involves consideration of deeper things than the merely obvious, and it might, perhaps, be necessary, in addressing a public in whom the understanding of the term has not become instinctive, to explain what one means by art.

Every painter hopes for a larger estimation than that awarded to him by a mere consideration of his public attributes. From the latter point of view the work of Sargent has received almost universal praise and, with a recklessness that is eloquent of the impressive nature of his gifts, he has been awarded a niche among those of the greatest artists of the world. But the judgment

of contemporaries must inevitably submit to reconsideration by posterity, and no serious critic would attempt what may, after all, be but futile speculation.

The painters who are finally entitled to be considered artists are few in number, and fewer still those who have an invariable right to the title.

A portrait-painter, and particularly one who has practised almost exclusively in a professional capacity, is in a special class. He is too often oppressed in the free exercise of the artistic spirit by the exigencies of his special branch of activity. He is concerned with considerations ulterior to matters of art.

He has not, in many cases, the right of selection of subject, which is a fundamental necessity in the production of a work of art. It would perhaps be truer, in the case of a free artist, to say that the subject selects the artist rather than the reverse. At best it is, as it were, an act of mutual and spontaneous recognition.

The artist's aim is to express the emotion aroused in him by the contemplation of nature. It is a mysterious process and almost anything may initiate it; its operations are unequal and unforeseen, and are governed sometimes by quite irrelevant circumstances. Therefore, it would be unreasonable to expect a portrait-painter to experience emotion every time he is asked to paint a portrait. Nor is it the first business of a professional portrait-painter to produce a work of art; he has merely to paint a good portrait.

There have been great portrait-painters who were at the same time great artists: Velasquez, Rembrandt, Frans

Hals, El Greco, Degas ; but it must be admitted that there are extraordinary spiritual difficulties in the way.

The modern painter suffers also from conditions which were not imposed on earlier masters : conditions which operate against the production of a work of art—the necessity, for example, of attracting attention in a mixed exhibition, which militates against the expression of those quiet conditions of truth which are essential to a work of art.

It is a commonplace that Sargent was a great portrait-painter ; that he had a technical facility and a power of presentation that were unrivalled.

The profundity of his insight into character was naturally unequal. Questions of sympathy and interest operated ; in the one case, towards a greater tenderness, as in his portraits of the Countess of Lathom and Lady Sassoon ; in the other to keener penetration, as in the portraits of Ena and Betty Wertheimer, Asher Wertheimer, Lady Faudel-Phillips, and others.

Occasionally, as it seems to me, there were certain subtle types that baffled or eluded him, and so his portraits of Henry James and Professor Bywater are not numbered among his most successful. This was partly a question of technique. A great facility like Sargent's, though an invaluable asset, also has its penalties. Sargent acquired a very definite technique from his master, Carolus-Duran, a technique which peculiarly suited his talent and perception, but which, like all definitely acquired technique, was somewhat inelastic.

For the majority of the subjects presented to his brush,

his method was admirably suitable ; but to the realisation of a character exceptionally elusive and subtle, a facile technique and one which had to preserve certain aspects of its quality was not adapted. Such occasions of inadequacy must arise in the practice of any painter who uses an unvarying method. It is a question of the balance between means and end. Technique should be a means, but there is a danger, in the case of a definitely acquired method, of its becoming, in some degree, an end in itself. Strictly speaking, technique should be inseparable from intuition. The method of expression should be dependent on and dictated by the quality and nature of the intuition. But it is so only in the greatest artists.

It is known that the portrait of Henry James gave the artist an unusual amount of trouble. The brilliant summary which was Sargent's usual practice and for which his technique was the perfect vehicle of expression, could not be applied to a very elusive personality, and his method, so admirable in the one case, was ineffective in the other.

Possibly in the practice of such a profession as Sargent's, the perfect relationship between intuition and responsive technique could not be maintained, for the remarkable extent of his work, as well as its quality, has to be considered, and a definite method of painting was inevitable.

The impulse of his hand—his dexterous and certain hand—was not always sufficiently controlled by the judgment of his eye. The temptation to the exercise of dexterity was a concomitant of his easy gift. But

however the quality of his achievement might vary—and he could not have been an artist if it did not—he could always rely on his swift perception of the points of personality and his perfect sense of the picturesque, which ensured, on the one hand, a likeness and a definite sense of identity, and, on the other, a pleasing and harmonious picture.

Sargent was an “objective” rather than a “subjective” painter. In his portraits the subjects speak for themselves; he does not tell us, except on rare occasions, what he feels about them; so that, at times, one experiences a sense of cold if brilliant analysis; one holds aloof and admires when one should inevitably surrender to the artist with that strange indefinable emotion one experiences in the contemplation of great works of art.

There have been painters of a livelier curiosity and a more adventurous spirit than Sargent. His development was unusually straightforward; the path he chose at the beginning he pursued to the end; there are no anomalies in his work, except perhaps his Chantrey picture, “Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose,” which stands out as different from anything else. His work cannot be divided into periods, that favourite practice of art historians; the only division marks his change from France to England. Two pictures, in which he showed himself strangely susceptible to the influence of his environment, “Paul Helleu Sketching” and “Claude Monet Painting at the edge of a Wood,” reflect in a subtle way something of the manner of the artist he was painting. These are different from the rest of his work, but, generally speaking, what could

be said of his earlier work could be applied with equal truth to his later, and so it becomes almost superfluous to add anything to Mrs. Meynell's eloquent eulogy.

Once his admirably effective manner was established, it never seriously varied, and it can hardly be said that his later work revealed a development of facility—that was already perfect of its kind. Nor was there any waning of interest, a remarkable fact considering the extent and consistency of his production. There seems to have been a constant renewal of his ability; he was like a fountain that never failed to pour forth its crystal spring.

He may not, in later life, have excelled those remarkable portrait groups of ladies, usually of three figures, which so well displayed his gift of composition, and which created something of a sensation when they appeared, but he had the wisdom to refrain from repetition when repetition might have resulted in nothing but the creation of mere *tours-de-force*. Nor, in the later years, was there anything comparable with those attempts at originality of composition like "The Children of E. D. Boit" (painted under the influence of Velasquez) and "Mrs. Carl Meyer and Children." Considered audacious, they were notably attractive and successful. And his occasional essays in romantic portraiture, like his "Robert Louis Stevenson" and "Padre Sebastiano," where he has caught his subject very much at home, had the power to charm, while revealing, as it were unawares, some unfamiliar aspect of his subjects' personality.

If he was the exponent of the normal school of

painting, he was its greatest example. Unlike many of his contemporaries, particularly in France, he appears to have had no temptation to experiment, to invent or to explore fresh avenues of expression. Having early found his vein of gold, he followed it to the end, and if the nuggets he showed to the world varied in size and quality, that was in the nature of things.

Comparisons are foolish when they are not odious ; Sargent has been likened to Velasquez, but there is no essential resemblance. The fact of actual portraiture counted far too much with him. Velasquez would never have sacrificed the essential mysteries of his art—the poetry of tone, for instance—to the necessities of the portrait, as Sargent sometimes did. His excellent copy of "Las Meninas" demonstrates quite clearly one essential difference between his work and that of the great Spanish master. But if a comparison must be found, it might be with Frans Hals.

Both had similar bravura of handling and unfailing facility ; but there is again a difference. The tone and tonal relationships of Hals' painting are always exquisite. Sargent had not the same integrity in that matter. He sacrificed too much to effect. And this is nowhere more apparent than in the early portrait group of the Misses Vickers. The figures are posed in a dark room, almost as dark as a cellar, yet the faces are painted in the light of day. Effect is gained, but at the expense of artistic truth, and it is such matters that posterity will consider when the time comes to estimate Sargent's standing purely as an artist. And as such, he will probably be judged

on some of his smaller and more spontaneous works : on his "Portrait Study of Eleanora Duse" and on the little "Portrait of a Lady" (Miss Paget), both highly intelligent and sensitive works. There is then no other aim but the direct realisation of vision ; no other claims to stain, however unconsciously, the purity of expression.

Sargent was always at his best with strongly marked personalities. If he could enjoy himself to his heart's content when painting the Wertheimers, he was not the less aware of the fine quality of the more subtle but not less definite personalities of Edwin Booth, caught in the act of reverie or reminiscence ; the Hon. Joseph Choate, with his air of sweet humanity, or the refinement and graciousness of Joseph Pulitzer. One is privileged for a moment to enter into the life, and even the thoughts, of these rare individuals. Indeed, to see his portraits is to know something real of the men he painted. His intelligent portrait of Edward Robinson, for example, leads us a little way into the cultured mind of the Director of the great Metropolitan Museum of New York ; and one may enjoy the integrity of Major Higginson, caught happily in an hour of ease ; or admire, perhaps with some sense of awe, the splendidly chiselled face of John D. Rockefeller.

He rose at times to great heights in his portraits of women. The handsome portrait of Mrs. Charles Inches has something of the artistic severity and grace of his Madame Gautreau, though the finely marked features and the flashing eyes have a sweeter charm than that of the famous French portrait. His brush was not less

adequate to portray the humanity of so fine a personality as Mrs. Adrian Iselin or the gracious friendliness of Mrs. Montgomery Sears.

Nor has the gentleness of childhood been more finely realised than in the portrait of little Miss Beatrice Goelet.

Sargent's sympathy with humanity, his bonhomie, his occasional flashes of satire and of humour, have been demonstrated time after time. One can easily multiply instances ; they are before us to be enjoyed in varying degrees ; for, after all, the work of Sargent makes directly for enjoyment ; for enjoyment of the masterly and felicitous ease with which he presented to the world his subjects, in their characteristic environment and attitude ; enjoyment of the sweep of his resilient brush, which expressed at the same time modelling, character and contour. And such needs neither authority nor introduction.

J. B. MANSON.

INTRODUCTION

by

MRS. MEYNELL

(1903)

EVEN the critic of some twenty years ago, to whom the drama of life seemed "literary" and therefore not fit for painting, must confess to an interest in the subject of a picture when that picture is a portrait. The painter's perception of the character of his sitter is an essential part of his work, even of his execution. There is an insight in portraiture of which no one is afraid to speak. Even when, in the last century, the crime of "literature" was discovered, this was not accused of "literature," and no man charged this kind of "reading" with that sin. Most justly did the portrait-painter pass unrebuked.

To-day indeed we are disposed to admit within the sphere of the art of painting all things that the eye can reach, and its field is wide. The kingdom of the eye contains all that is simply visible of the history and drama of man, all his beauty, all the signs of his character, and the action and attitude of his passions: these things, as well as the "pattern" made by his figure and his furniture, composed. It contains also what the imagination of the eye can see—the apparition, the vision, and the

dream. The mere name of "vision" marks it as subject to the dominion of the eye. That man pays to literature a disproportionate homage who assigns to it all the show and exposition of humanity in disaster and felicity ; and does to art an answering wrong. Nay, because literature claims what is invisible and lodges within, art might well assert the greater right over what cannot be hidden but needs must make itself manifest, whether in the eyes of surprise, or in the movement of violence, or in the spiritual condition of a man, and the experience of his race, as they are noted in his aspect. These things are to be seen by a silent art.

Nor, as was said but now, has recent criticism—penultimate criticism for the present, and it may be new again not many years hence—denied this human and civilized intelligence to portraiture. It has even granted to the portrait-painter, as master of one of the intelligent arts, the praise due to a master of the intellectual arts, calling him psych^ologist. It is, however, by a degree of violence that this name is given to a painter. Here, indeed, something does seem to be taken from literature. Psychology must be expressed and stated in explicit words, and with explicit words painting has no need to deal. Therefore one may hesitate to name Mr. Sargent, as he has been named, a psychologist : that is, in his work, for obviously we are not to pass beyond the picture. He proves himself rather to be observant and vigilant, nay simple, as a great artist must be. How many and various qualities, mental and physical, meet to prepare that direct and single contemplation of the world might give us

matter for surmise ; for contemplation there is—something more than observation ; and something more than perception—insight.

Apart from this slight error (if it be one) of giving to painting the name of psychology, every interest is allowed by one consent to the subject of portraiture. The likeness of man or woman is a great thing to achieve ; if it lives at all it lives so long ! It gives long life, a life of ages, to all the incidents of this individual face, its age, its health, its consciousness, its race. It is evident that Mr. Sargent has keen sight for the signs of the races ; there is as it were the knack of Spain in his "Jaleo," something neither Italian nor Oriental, but proper to the spirit of the populace of this one peninsula, a somewhat deep-toned gaiety, a laugh in grave notes, and a kind of defiance, at least in the women. If the men have the nature of tenors, the women there have the nature of contraltos. In the "Javanese Dancer" the flat-footed, flat-handed action of the extreme East—a grace that has nothing to do with Raphael—is rendered with a delightful, amused, and sympathetic appreciation : the long code of Italian conventions disappears : the slender Javanese dance has weight—a confession of gravitation, whereas the occidental dance makes light of it. All that is alien here, the painter sees in the quick. When Mr. Sargent paints an American—the portrait of Mr. Roosevelt, for example—the eye has the look of America, the national habit is in the figure and head. No caricaturist has so much as attempted this aspect, because the caricaturist apparently never sees it, but thinks he sees something else—happily, for the real

signs of nation and race are too fine and good for inhuman burlesque: we may be glad to see them reserved for worthy and, in truth, more humorous eyes. Every man in his humour is every man in the humour of his fathers and of the soil. In like manner, Mr. Sargent paints an Englishwoman with all the accents, all the negatives, all the slight things that are partly elegant and partly dowdy—one can hardly tell which of those two—the characteristics that remove her, further than any other woman, from the peasant and the land, further than an artificial Parisian: Mr. Sargent perceives these keenly, never forcing the signs, for force would destroy anything so delicate. It is perhaps almost necessary to have been an Anglo-Saxon child living abroad in order to have the nicest sense of the aspect of an English lady (I use the noun, of course, intentionally); if you have had that little experience—and it was Mr. Sargent's, *à propos*—having also had a child's profound apprehension of personality, you have the most perfect perception of her Englishism. There is one of Mr. Sargent's portraits, a most charming one, of a lady very slightly and beautifully faded, sitting, with her slender hands in view. There is nothing to connect her with Italy, and the fancy is quite gratuitous; but she is so peculiarly English that one can hear her mispronounce, with a facile haste, some Italian word with a double consonant in it. Another Englishwoman's portrait, the masterly picture of Mrs. Charles Hunter, with its suggestion of refinement and fresh air, courage, spirit, enterprise and wit, is subtly English. And purely French, with a French character lying out of the view of the caricaturist,

is the fine clear portrait of Madame Gautreau, the firm and solid profile, with decision, not weakness, in its receding forehead and small chin. The Hebrew portraits present more obviously, but also not less subtly, the characters of race ; so do all those, pictures or drawings, in which Italians are studied. The laugh of the young man pulling a rope is perfectly national.

The race, nevertheless, does not overpower the least of the personal traits that are, personally, worthy of record. Mr. Sargent takes at times a sudden view, and thus makes permanent, too singly, one aspect of an often altering face. It seems to be so, for example, in the portrait of Coventry Patmore, in which that great poet's vitality wears an aspect too plainly of mere warfare. Even here one may hesitate, conjecturing that some other eyes may see in this likeness traces of "the many movements" of a poet's nature. But "one thing at a time" is the right rule for much portraiture ; and yet again, it has perhaps been obeyed here where it should not. Elsewhere the accident of a moment that is not important may be something too passing for the dignity of a portrait ; but assuredly this is noted only when there has been nothing to note that has a graver claim to "immortality." I rather report another's murmuring than my own (the murmuring of one who prizes Mr. Sargent's genius in such a degree as no one can outdo) if I aver that he tells us, in a portrait, now and then, such a fact as that a man has or has not slept well. When he has something finer to show us, I do not think Mr. Sargent shows us *that* ; but the graver conditions of life are so visible to him, and their aspect is so plain in

the reflection of his picture, that it is told of one portrait that a physician made a diagnosis from it and named a malady until then uncertain—a disorder that has a characteristic effect upon bearing and expression. The ordinary eye might see in that expression nothing but a kind of demonstrative health. It is moreover interesting, in the case of this portrait, to know that the painter, at work on one of the finest pictures of his wonderful gallery, a picture magnificently arranged, was keen as well as large of sight, and saw both the pictorial beauty of the accessories and the difference between the look of another woman of the world and the look of this one, who wears her jewels with an almost secret difference. If the story is true, well ; if it is not true, it has been aptly invented by one who must know something of Mr. Sargent's manner of seeing and of perceiving what he sees. An example of the portrait of a moment that is full of spirit and action is that of Mrs. George Batten, which breathes the last note of a song—a note of Tosti's, one might guess. With this we may compare the repose of the standing portrait of Lord Ribblesdale, in which one hardly knows whether face or figure is more expressive of the poise of life—the unstable equilibrium by which a man is thus admirably erect, so that nothing stable and secure seems so upright, and nothing in flight more full of life. Another pause is that in the face of Eleonora Duse in the quick sketch in oils of which the reproduction is one of the treasures of this book. The face is quite tranquil, so that other faces look uneasy in comparison, and the eyes under their sombre lids have, in this brief sketch, the most direct look

in the world. The great tragedian gives in her portrait, as in her art, the impression of an incomparable sincerity, and faces us from the yonder side of the common human custom of intercepted, veiled, retreating or hesitating looks. She does not find these minor disguises to be worth while. Mr. Sargent's sketch is peculiarly moderate, and the reproduction happily keeps all the distinction he has made between the one large light on the forehead and the lower lights on the nose, cheek, and chin, so that it is the modelling of the forehead that is most important, but one part is as simple as another.

Those who would have refused to the art of painting—I think the idea began to be sent broadcast by the essay of a French critic dated some time after the middle of the nineteenth century or when the Romantique painters were mostly dead—those, I say, who debarred this art from dealing with any form of drama (for fear of “literature”) should consistently bar the attitude of action. The angel with the palm must not fly down to Tintoretto's Ursula leading her multitude of martyrs. Titian's tempestuous angel of the Annunciation must not run to the Virgin, with clapping wings and arm aloft under the cloud of an impatient sky; nor must his Dionysus spring to Ariadne from the car. Inasmuch as very few modern designers have the power of movement, this incapacitating rule would serve the turn of the time well enough, and no doubt has made shift to excuse the languor of those who had not energy. No need to discuss now the inconstancy of that rule which allows a wheel to turn, or a fountain to play; a wheel to turn, but not the living pinion of

Gabriel, and a fountain to play, but not the muscle of Hercules. Mr. Sargent heeds no such inauthoritative law ; and when he has not the vital stillness of a portrait, he has such a spirit of movement as that of "El Jaleo" and "A Spanish Dance," the latter with its Goya-like, straight-topped throng in the background. He achieves not only the beauty of the attitude, but the power of the action, of the dance.

Amongst the pictures of children, the portrait of the Hon. Laura Lister takes its place with the most beautiful painted in all centuries since it was first held worth while to paint that childhood which the fathers and mothers of old were in haste to see securely past. Portraiture came comparatively late in the Italian schools—Venice apart—and seems to console or flatter their decline ; and the portraits of children came last. But in Spain, Holland, Venice, and England, the great age was an age of portraits, and in our time the best work, since the landscapes of Norwich and Barbizon came to an end, is portraiture again. Portraits of childhood and an exquisite study of twilight and lantern-light, with the fine violet tints that artificial light lends to evening air, and with white as lovely in its coolness as the white of Titian in its gold, are united in the Garden picture, "Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose." It is strange that any one affects to make light of truth and to look elsewhere for decoration, when nature and truth can look so beautiful.

The coming of a great painter is so rare, and his contemporaries are so much and so often taken by surprise by the annual exhibition of his genius, that it must be

difficult to them to assure themselves of what he is. The work of Sir Joshua Reynolds is ranged and ranked, and every Englishman has the leisure of all his life, and of the longest of its years—the young years of education—for placing himself, in his turn, in the orderly ranks of admirers. But the works of a great living master appear and appear, they are scattered ; comparison with masters of the past is too sudden, and there has not been time for a general consent. Nevertheless any student who has been called to give to the living painter the long and deliberate attention reserved in general for the dead, may perhaps be allowed to go in advance and to take on himself the usual office of numbers. Even so a great artist has no little privation, during his life, of the honours he is earning. We know that it was so with Reynolds, for the praise he had in his time is not to be compared with the homage he has in ours.

In the case of Mr. Sargent one supreme quality is so evident and so all-intelligible, that his work could never be neglected. It is a quality for all eyes and all intelligences. "The many cannot miss his meaning," said James Russell Lowell of his own great contemporary author, "and only the few can find it." The many cannot miss the life of Mr. Sargent's painting, if the masterly method that brings that life to light is for students only to understand, or even only for painters. It is not necessary that the laity should know much of this ; and so much said about "technique" outside of the studios is surely little to the purpose. The artist does not join in the prattle with a public that is better

employed in simple appreciation. Every art and craft has its methods for its own use. There must, for example, be much technique in the safe driving of a cab in Piccadilly, and assuredly we admire, and we trust and we profit; but the cabman keeps his technique to himself and makes no appeal whatever to his "fare," does not ask that client to understand him. One professor only—the playwright—seems inclined to cry out about his troubles—the difficulty of composing his scenes. If our friends in front did but know he cries, in effect, how exceedingly difficult it is to arrange these things, they would not complain of a tedious fore-scene; so much has to be doing behind; pray, a little more patience and technique! There is, however, more dignity in keeping separate places.

We spectators can hardly be anything else than ignorant, even with a smattering—ignorant of the art of the painter. A certain education, as has been said, makes us able to see well, and that is our art and needs our attention. It is our contribution, and we owe it. Life, light, form, and colour in a picture, and indeed in nature, must have our intelligent eyes; but there is something transcendent in the power of him who shows us the great quality of life so plainly that the simplest of us cannot but see. The life of Mr. Sargent's portraits is so much more than the trivial vivacity which takes a careless eye, it is so truly vitality, that the eye meeting it, though it may be simple, must not be silly, must not be vulgar. Therefore when the comments of an English crowd seem dull to the listener, as they do, that crowd seems yet to retrieve itself, and makes no small amends, even at the Royal Academy,

by generally saying of a splendid Sargent that it has life. As for colour, the love of it is with the greater number of us, but it needs definite education. Mr. Sargent is not distinctively a colourist, although he has truly exquisite colour, whether in his wonderful flesh, or in his whole system of shadows, or in some beautiful blue of a decorative sky. But I think a painter who is more distinctively a colourist pauses upon the colour of a shadow, for example, as Sargent does not seem to do. Rembrandt is called a chiaroscurist rather than a colourist, but he is surely proved a colourist also, by his dwelling upon the colour of some shadowed background. Mr. Sargent's colour is rather something on the way to some beauty and truth of value and relation. Nature is full of passages of mystery, lapses of light and lapses of detail. A comparison is suggested to me of this beautiful "lost and found" in the shadowy world we see, with the momentary lapse of the lark's song when we hear him sing at his height, and its momentary recovery. There are in all natural scenes under our vision a hundred opportunities for pausing on the beauty of these retreats; the painter visibly delights in them—the colourist chiefly for their colour. Mr. Sargent has not this delight passionately, though he has it most delicately, and we may suppose his chief felicity to be in perfect relations and in subtle modelling.

It is interesting to note that one art which seems to be deprived of these passages of mystery, has yet found a means to recover them—the art of sculpture. It is true that sculpture, like architecture, if it has no mystery in

its making, has (being round and solid and invested by lights and shadows, and attended by distance) the mysteries of nature herself. Yet a mystery of the artist's own has a value and suggests his imagination. In Michelangelo's unfinished "Giorno" and in another great figure of his in Florence, half hewn from the block, the mystery is less his than ours; for it is due to the incomplete condition of a work greatly begun by an illustrious hand. But surely M. Rodin, in our own day, has given to the complete work a partial veil, a lost and found, a pause and an interval, full of life. It is a pleasure to associate this high contemporary name with that of Mr. Sargent, none the less because on his visit to London M. Rodin recognized the supreme master of painting in the portrait group of the three Misses Hunter, "that bouquet of flowers." From the strong and delicate modelling of Mr. Sargent's heads, a sculptor might make a bust.

"There are two methods of laying oil-colour which can be proved right—one of them having no display of hand, the other involving it essentially and as an element of its beauty. Which of those styles," Ruskin writes to Dante Rossetti, "you adopt, I do not care." Perhaps if he had written this with revision in a book, and not hastily in a letter, Ruskin would have changed the word "display" for one of more dignity. The beauty of the "power of hand" made evident stands clear of the soliciting action of "display" as we use that word currently. It is a manifestation indeed, and explicit, and the manifestation is veritably the beauty. "Display" seems to

suggest a secondary grace, an afterthought, and once more to divide style, which Ruskin obviously did not intend to do. But apart from this hasty word, the saying has a significance not only for those who persist, against his own profession, in believing that Ruskin held only one method "proved to be right," and this the method he mentions first, attributing it to Holbein and Van Eyck ; but for more serious readers and students. Of all the arts our impulse may be to protest that there are not two methods but many. Essentially, nevertheless, there are two. The equality of the two peaks, the two summits, has but lately been proved aloft in the highest places of music. So unlike are the two "methods" there, that one might say two arts of music, two muses, rather than two methods. For when the great modern art of emotional expression first shook the hand and took the breath (its earliest thrill or grimace, I think, may be seen in a picture in the lower church at Assisi), the other, the unshaken art, was not abolished. It continued, and having shown the Crucifixion in mosaic, the Passion in literature, the Lamentations in music, with a steadfast soul and no tremor, it achieved the purely perfect and beautiful melody of Mozart, which expresses nothing, the melody of the unbroken heart. Music has to serve us with examples of the dual art because her examples are perfect. But the examples of painting also are true ; and as the mind of art was divided, so also was her manner—the laying of oil-colour, as Ruskin says, has two right ways. The unchanging quarrel bickers on under changing forms and various names, from generation to generation, because

the world is slow to confess that there are two right ways—for fear, perhaps, lest it should be committed to many. Manifestly one sect, being right, cannot convince nor even convict the other, this also being right. There has never been peace since the art of criticism began. That is, mere writers on art will not be friends, whereas we do not conceive that Hogarth had enmity of heart towards Velasquez, or Tintoretto towards Holbein. “Twain is the mind” of art, and her hand has two laws.

It need not be said, by-the-by, that beauty of execution is inseparable from all really fine painting, and that the work which has it not is not the best of either of two right and lawful schools; for it is of power, and not of beauty only, that Ruskin writes. Hogarth's execution is very beautiful, but his “display” of power of hand is so suppressed as to escape some admiring eyes.

Mr. Sargent is eminent on the summit of one of these equal heights. He has indeed shown in modern times how high that height reaches—the height of the “power of hand” made manifest, the manifestation being an essential part of the beauty of that power. He is therefore one of the family of Velasquez, and no less than his chief heir.

A. M.

PLATES

CARMENCITA



EL JALEO

PLATE

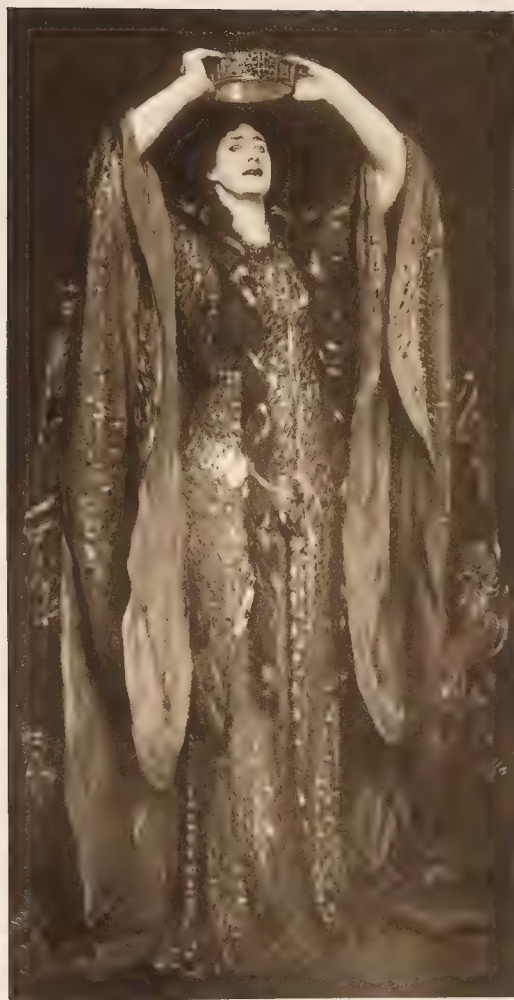


MADAME GAUTREAU

THE END OF THE WORLD



MISS ELLEN TERRY
AS LADY MACBETH



CARNATION, LILY, LILY, ROSE

CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY



MRS. BOIT



CHILDREN OF E. D. BOIT

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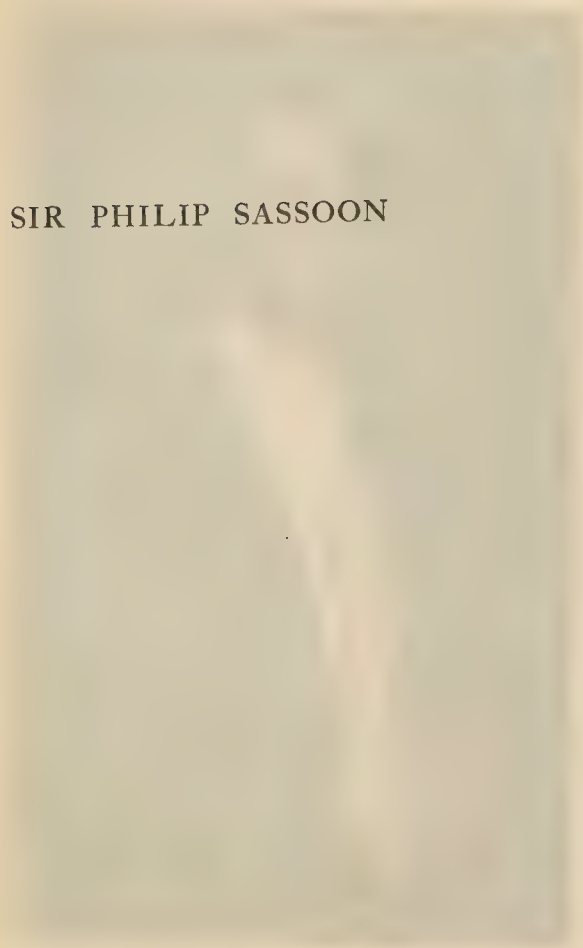


21. *Portrait of a man*
H. 10. 10.

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MAJOR H. L. HIGGINSON

THE END OF THE WORLD



The Oregonian, Portland, 1901
Vol. 1

THE BROOK



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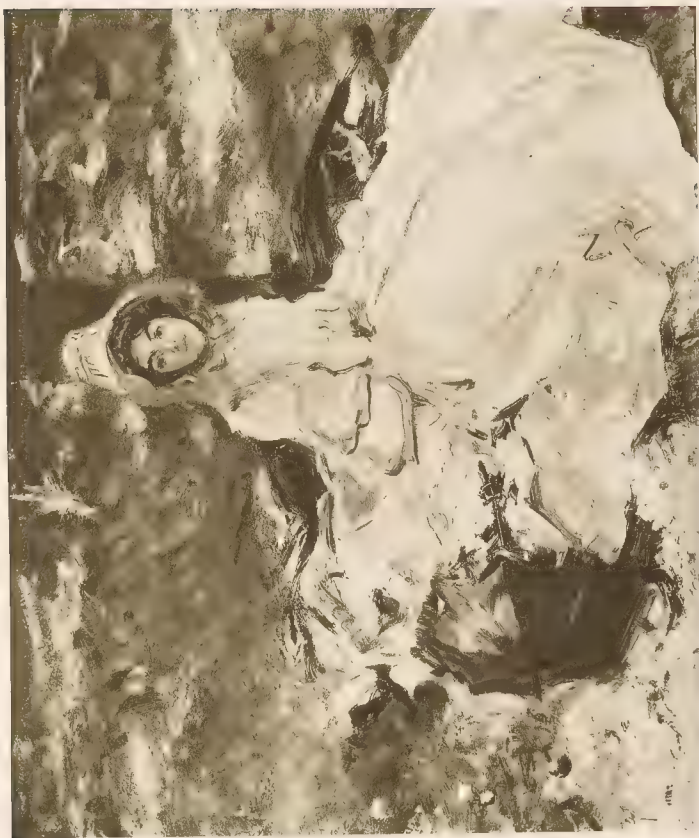


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The Coronan Gallery of Art.
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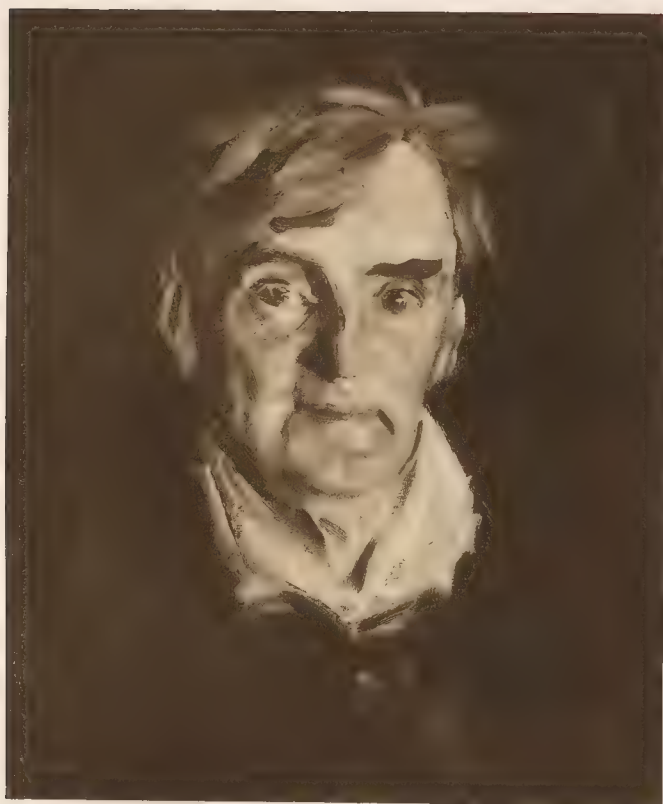


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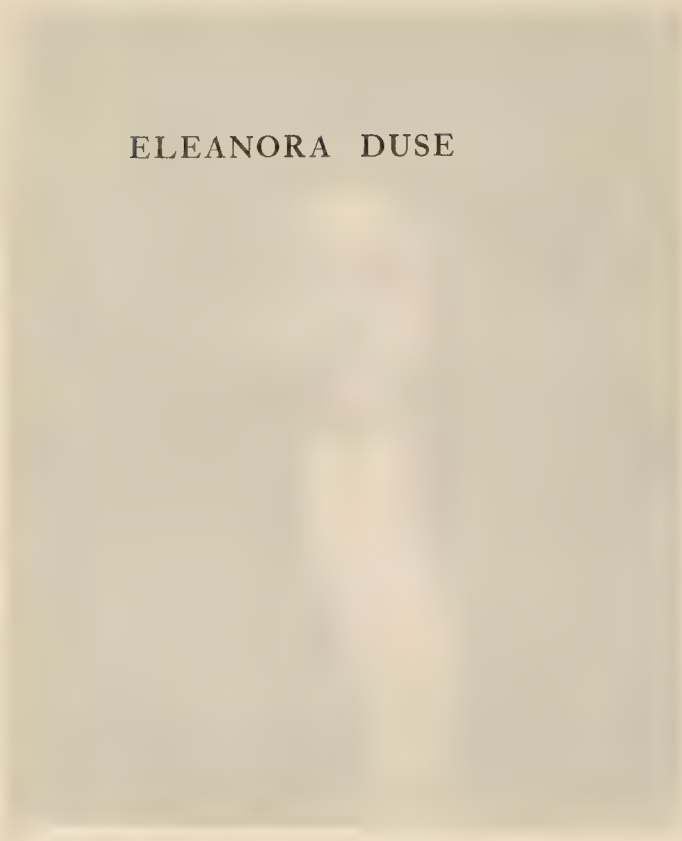




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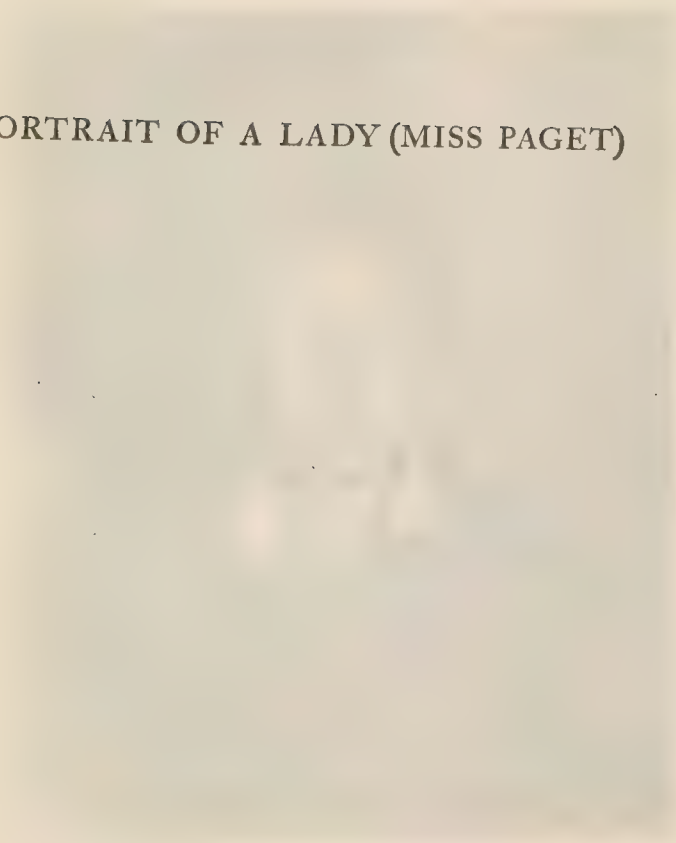


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PORTRAIT OF A LADY (MISS PAGET)



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EGYPTIAN GIRL





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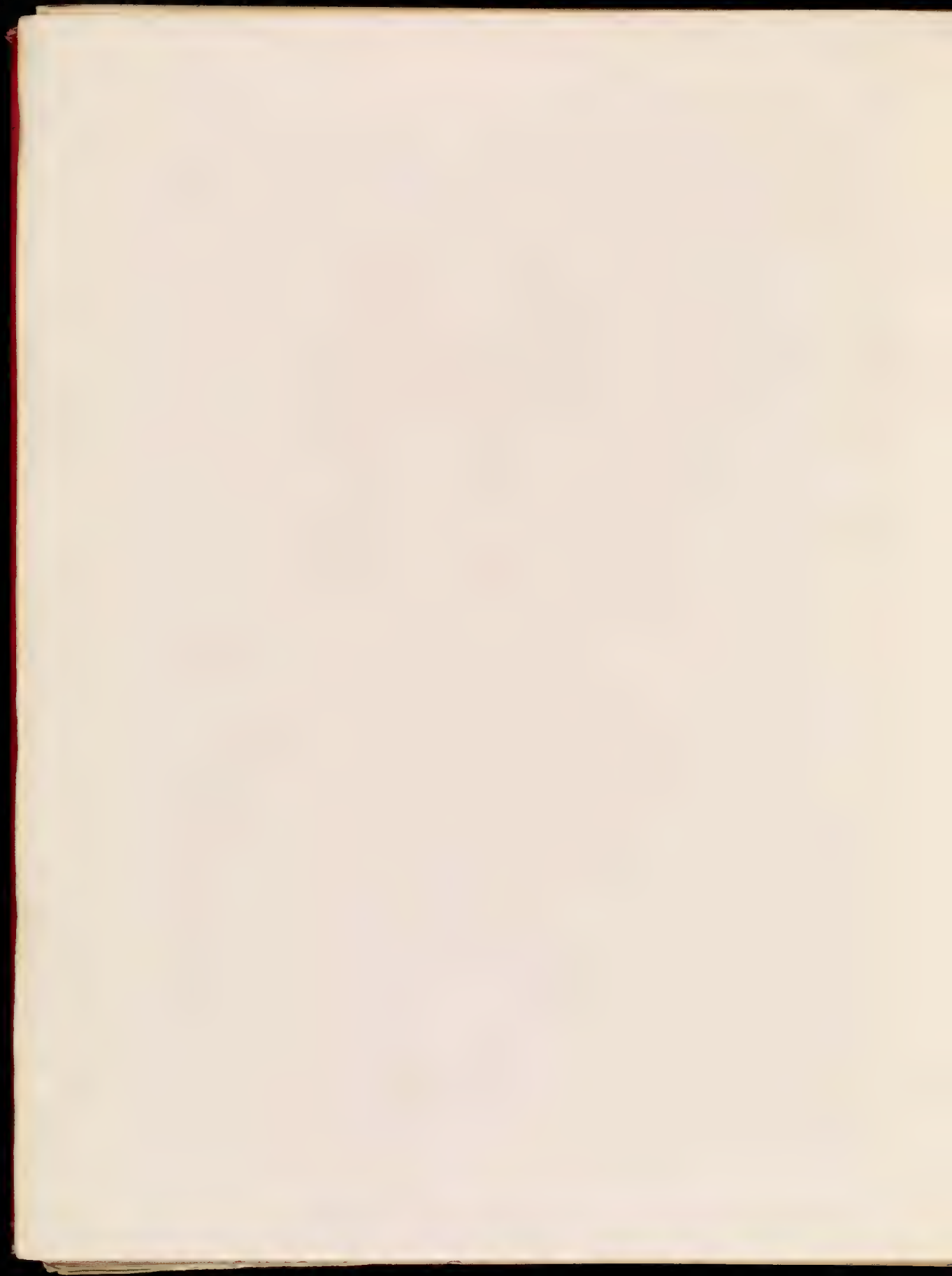
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